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17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS) Rural youth, defined as those aged 15 to 24, comprise an important portion of the U. S. population. They number 7.5 million persons, with 5.7 million residing in rural-nonfarm areas and 1.8 million residing in rural-farm areas. Rural-nonfarm and rural-farm youth in these ages form a larger percentage of their respective total populations than urban youth. Rural youth aged 15 to 19 are more numerous than those aged 20 to 24, because of out-migration. Rural youth are more concentrated in the South than in any other region. Of the 7.5 million rural youth, approximately 925,000 are nonwhites. Nonwhites represent slightly more than 11 percent of the rural-nonfarm youth but nearly 15 percent of rural-farm youth. Sex ratios of males per 100 females are high in rural populations. Among rural-nonfarm youth aged 15 to 24, the sex ratio is 113 to 6; among rural-farm youth of these ages, the sex ratios is 120 to 4. These high ratios are associated with the high rate of out-migration of females from rural areas, and with the location of military bases and penal institutions in rural areas. The age group under consideration covers the period in which most marriages occur in the United States. Approximately 1 in every 6 or 7 females aged 15 to 19 in rural areas is married whereas only about 1 in 25 or 30 males of this age is married. At each age between 14 and 24, lower proportions of rural than urban youth are enrolled in school. The age of 15 to 24 is the one in which most youths enter the labor force. For urban males 14 and 15 years old, the percentage in the labor force ranges from 12 to 23 percent; for rural males, the comparable range in percentage is from 77 to 91. The rural-nonfarm population will keep pace with urban growth; the rural-farm portion will decline.

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SOME DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RURAL YOUTH

by

J. Allan Beegle
Professor of Sociology and Anthropology
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
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National Committee for Children and Youth
1145 Nineteenth Street, N. W.
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THE CENTER FOR CULTURAL STUDIES
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Alamosa

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by

J. Allan Beegle
Professor of Sociology and Anthropology
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan

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SOME DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RURAL YOUTH

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SOME DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RURAL YOUTH

by J. Allan Beegle*

INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of this paper is to describe rural youth from the point of view of the demographer. Demographers are interested in the numbers, distributions and characteristics of populations such as age, sex, race and nativity, but above all in their birth and death rates, and in selective migration. Youth, however defined specifically, represents an age segment from a total population. The demographer seeks to answer questions about size, distribution, and other characteristics of this age segment, brought about by the interaction of birth and death rates and selective migration. In this discussion of rural youth, migration assumes a crucial role.

The paper is divided into two major parts. First, the rural population and its component parts are described. Second, the number, distribution, and selected characteristics of rural youth are outlined, together with an attempt to suggest future changes. A brief summary follows these two major parts.

Before turning to the specific concerns of this paper, several general observations may be useful. Contemporary American society is best understood, it seems to me, as a predominantly urbanized and industrial society. As such it has become a highly organized mass society in which all sectors are interdependent. Rural as well as urban people respond to virtually the same mass media and react in much the same way. No longer does a wide gulf separate rural and urban residents. In a general sense modern American society may be viewed as a metropolitan economy in which the larger cities integrate commercial, financial, and other activities throughout a large area. Such centers may be viewed as "dominants" in terms of organizing the economy and social structure, not only of urban but also of the rural sector as well.(1) From this description of contemporary American society, it follows that urban centers draw manpower, as they have in the past, from rural areas. The patterns of rural to urban migration are so widely accepted that many farm youth grow up with the expectation that they will and must move away. From the demographer's perspective, modern American society exemplifies those societies which have fully completed the transition from high birth and death rates to low or controlled birth and death rates.(2) Accordingly, changing distributions and characteristics between sectors within the American population are largely due to selectivity in migration. We now turn to an examination of the rural population component of the United States.

THE RURAL POPULATION IN 1960

In this paper the rural population is subdivided, in accord with census practice, into the rural-nonfarm and rural-farm components. The rural-farm

*The author wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Rodger Rice, Assistant Instructor, Sociology and Anthropology, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan.

portion of the rural population includes those persons living on farms. As a result of a new definition used in 1960, the rural-farm population consists of persons living in rural territory on places of 10 acres or more from which sales of farm products amounted to $50 or more in 1959, or on places of less than 10 acres from which sales of farm products amounted to $250 or more in 1959. This change in definition reduced substantially the size of the farm population over the number that would have been so classified had the 1950 definition been applied. (3)

The rural-nonfarm portion of the rural population is a heterogeneous residual population which remains after the rural-farm and urban populations have been identified. Specifically, the rural-nonfarm population includes: (1) residents of small towns, villages and hamlets under 2500 in population; (2) residents of the open country who do not meet the requirements of farm residence; and (3) residents of "fringe" areas, especially those outside the incorporated limits of cities under 50,000 in size. Thus, the rural population includes both the rural-nonfarm and rural-farm components. Due to the lack of homogeneity in the rural-nonfarm segment and the obvious "non-rural" character of a large part of it, attention is concentrated on the rural-farm segment, and data are shown separately for the two rural segments.

NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE RURAL POPULATION

The total rural population of the United States in 1960 amounted to 54 million persons, or about 30 percent of the total. The rural-nonfarm segment numbered nearly 41 million; the rural-farm segment approximately 13 million. In terms of percentages of the total population, the former comprised 22.6 percent and the latter 7.5 percent. Regional variations in rurality show the South and North Central States to be the most rural regions and the Northeast and West to be the least rural regions. While the South is more than 41 percent rural, only 10.8 percent of this region's population is classed as rural-farm. Other details concerning regional differences in rural population are shown in Table 1.

RACE AND NATIVITY OF THE RURAL POPULATION

As shown in Table 2, the total population of the United States is composed of approximately 89 percent whites and approximately 11 percent non-whites. The proportion of non-whites in the rural-nonfarm population is slightly below the national average; that in the rural-farm population is slightly above the national average. Non-whites are disproportionately represented in both farm and rural-nonfarm parts of the South, and comprise a significant part of the rural population in the West.

There were about 5.6 million non-whites in the rural population in 1960. Of this number about 4 million were rural-nonfarm residents, and about 1.6 million were rural-farm residents. The number of non-whites in four regions is given in Table 2. Non-whites include Negroes as well as Indians, Japanese, Chinese, Philippinos, and others, but of all rural non-whites in the United States, a vast majority (5.1 million) are Negroes. Approximately 378,000 are American Indians, 83,000 are Japanese, 11,000 are Chinese, 47,000 are Philippinos, and 68,000 are other "minor" races.

Table 1. Population of the United States and Component Regions by Rural-nonfarm and Rural-farm Residence, 1960

United States and Regions	Total		All Rural		Rural-nonfarm		Rural-farm	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
U. S. Total	179,325,671	100.0	54,041,888	30.1	40,596,990	22.6	13,444,898	7.5
Northeast	44,681,702	100.0	8,833,684	19.7	7,926,261	17.7	912,423	2.0
North Central	51,623,773	100.0	16,138,272	31.2	10,745,701	20.8	5,392,571	10.4
South	54,963,470	100.0	22,797,630	41.5	16,876,833	30.7	5,920,797	10.8
West	28,056,726	100.0	6,267,302	22.3	5,048,195	18.0	1,219,107	4.3

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, General Social and Economic Characteristics, United States Summary. Final Report PC(1)-1C.

Table 2. White and Non-whites Population of The United States and Component Regions by Rural-nonfarm and Rural-farm Residence, 1960.

United States and Regions	Total		All Rural		Rural-nonfarm		Rural-farm	
	Number	Per-cent	Number	Per-cent	Number	Per-cent	Number	Per-cent
U. S. Total								
Whites	158,837,671	88.6	48,395,005	89.6	36,543,205	90.0	11,851,800	88.2
Non-whites	20,488,000	11.4	5,646,883	10.4	4,053,785	10.0	1,593,098	11.8
Northeast								
Whites	41,527,941	92.9	8,688,328	98.3	7,782,615	98.2	905,713	99.3
Non-whites	3,153,761	7.1	150,356	1.7	143,646	1.8	6,710	0.7
North Central								
Whites	48,005,880	93.0	15,916,631	98.6	10,555,502	98.2	5,361,129	99.4
Non-whites	3,617,893	7.0	221,641	1.4	190,199	1.8	31,442	0.6
South								
Whites	43,469,348	79.1	17,993,118	78.9	13,553,880	80.3	4,439,238	75.0
Non-whites	11,494,122	20.9	4,804,512	21.1	3,322,953	19.7	1,481,559	25.0
West								
Whites	25,834,502	92.1	5,796,928	92.5	4,651,208	92.1	1,145,720	94.0
Non-whites	2,222,224	7.9	470,374	7.5	396,987	7.9	73,387	6.0

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, General Social and Economic Characteristics, United States Summary, Final Report PC(1)-1C.

While the white population of America derives largely from European stock, the foreign-born no longer form a large proportion of the total population. This is particularly true of the rural population. As of 1960, only 1.6 percent of the rural-farm population and 2.5 per cent of the rural-nonfarm population was born abroad. The comparable proportion for the urban population, however, was 6.8 percent.

AGE AND SEX COMPOSITION OF THE RURAL POPULATION

The age-sex structure of a population furnishes a "snapshot" which summarizes birth, death, and migration experiences of the population.

The age-sex structures of the rural-farm and of the rural-nonfarm populations differ from the urban population in important ways. The most important differences between the age-sex structures of the rural-farm and urban population are that in relation to the urban population, the farm population contains large cohorts of youth (except those under 5), very small cohorts of young adults, a deficiency of adults between 20 and 45 years of age and large proportions of older males. Clearly the major explanation of most of these differences is the urban migration of farm youth and the migration of older women, often when widowed, from the farm population.

The rural-nonfarm population in relation to the urban population generally has the features as the rural-farm population but in less extreme form. Especially noteworthy, for example, is the large proportion of children under 10. Also, the percentage of rural-nonfarm males is smaller than in urban areas for each age group after 25 until age 70; the percentage of rural-nonfarm females is smaller than in urban areas for each age-group after 20. While the same kinds of selective migration are in evidence in the two rural population structures, they are less extreme in the rural-nonfarm population.

RURAL YOUTH IN 1960

Youth are defined for most purposes as those between 15 and 24 years of age, although additional attention is given to those between 15 and 19 in the rural-farm group.(4)

NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF RURAL YOUTH

As defined in this paper, youth form a significant part of the American population. Youth between the ages of 15 and 24 include about 24 million persons or 13.4 percent of the total population in 1960. Rural youth number approximately 7.5 million persons, including 5.7 million with rural-nonfarm residences and 1.8 million with rural-farm residences. Youth account for 14.1 percent of the total rural-nonfarm population and 13.7 percent of the total rural-farm population.

As presented in Table 3, youth in the ages of 15 to 19 in 1960 numbered about 3.2 million in the rural-nonfarm population and 1.3 million in the rural-farm population. The former represents 24.4 percent of all youth in these ages and the latter 9.5 percent. In each of the rural population groups, youth 15 to 19 are over-represented in comparison to those in the urban areas.

Table 3. Number, Distribution and Sex Ratio of 15-19 and 20-24 Year Old Groups in the United States, by Residence and Color, 1960.

Age and Color	Total	United States, by Residence		
		Urban	Rural-nonfarm	Rural-farm
U. S. Total				
Youth 15-19				
Number in age group	13,287,439	8,776,911	3,245,271	1,265,257
Percent by Residence	100.0	66.1	24.4	9.5
Percent age group is of all ages	7.4	7.0	8.0	9.4
Males per 100 Females	101.7	95.1	114.2	120.0
Youth 20 to 24				
Number in age group	10,803,169	7,729,522	2,494,963	578,684
Percent by Residence	100.0	71.5	23.1	5.4
Percent age group is of all ages	6.0	6.2	6.1	4.3
Males per 100 Females	95.7	89.2	113.4	118.5
U. S. Whites				
Youth 15 to 19				
Number in age group	11,666,367	7,729,401	2,858,390	1,078,576
Percent by Residence	100.0	66.3	24.5	9.2
Percent age group is of all ages	7.3	7.0	7.8	9.1
Males per 100 Females	102.1	95.6	114.0	122.0
Youth 20 to 24				
Number in age group	9,479,847	6,756,968	2,230,256	492,623
Percent by Residence	100.0	71.3	23.5	5.2
Percent age group is of all ages	6.0	6.1	6.1	4.2
Males per 100 Females	96.6	90.4	112.3	120.2
U. S. Non-whites				
Youth 15 to 19				
Number in age group	1,621,072	1,047,510	386,881	186,681
Percent by Residence	100.0	64.6	23.9	11.5
Percent age group is of all ages	7.9	7.1	9.5	11.7
Males per 100 Females	98.6	91.5	115.2	109.0
Youth 20 to 24				
Number in age group	1,323,322	972,554	264,707	86,061
Percent by Residence	100.0	73.5	20.0	6.5
Percent age group is of all ages	6.5	6.6	6.5	5.4
Males per 100 Females	89.7	80.9	122.8	109.4

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, General Social and Economic Characteristics, United State Summary. Final Report PC(1)-1C.

Youth in the ages of 20 to 24 in 1960 numbered about 2.5 million in the rural-nonfarm population and about one-half million in the rural-farm population. The former represents 23.3 percent of all youth in these ages and the latter represents 5.4 percent of all youth in these ages. Farm youth these ages are under-represented in relation to other youth.

Rural youth are not evenly distributed throughout the United States. Very large numbers are located in the South and North Central Regions and relatively small numbers in the Northeast and West Regions. Regional differences in the number of youth in 1960 are summarized in Table 4.

Proximity of white rural youth to large urban centers was investigated by classifying youth according to 50-mile distance bands from the nearest SMSA (Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area). Band 1 contained all rural-farm youth aged 15-19 and 20-24 residing within all SMSA's, Band 2 contained those residing outside of but within 50 miles of the nearest SMSA, Band 3 contained those between 50 and 100 miles, etc. The last band included rural-farm youth beyond 200 miles from the nearest SMSA. The proportion each age-sex group is of the total population (all age-sex groups combined) from which it came was computed, first for the nation as whole and then for each band distance. The results were converted to index numbers and plotted in Figure 2. In this figure, a value of over 100 indicates that an age-sex group within a distance band is over-represented compared to the proportion that age-sex group (aggregated for the whole nation) is of the total population of the nation. Likewise, a value under 100 indicates an under-representation.

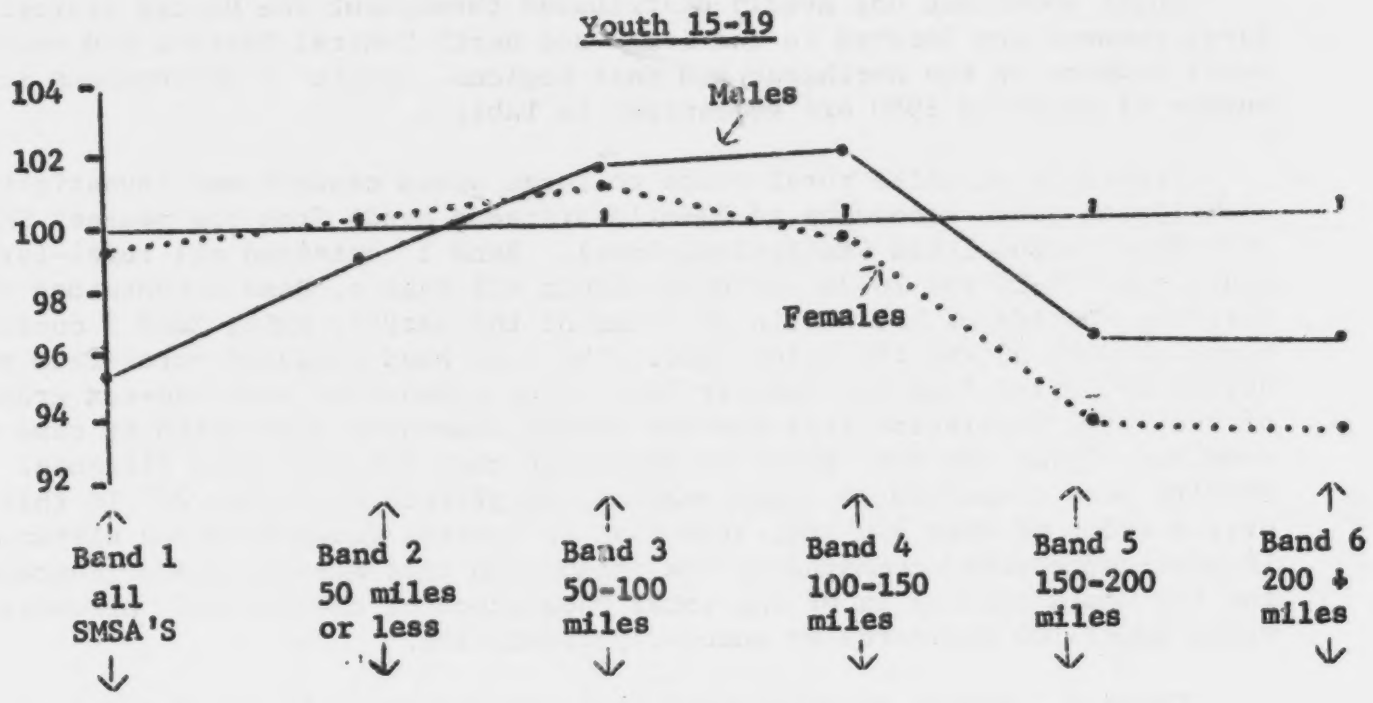
Table 4. Number of Youth Aged 15 to 19 and 20 to 24 for The United States, by Residence and Region, 1960.

Region	Youth 15-19		Youth 20-24	
	Rural-nonfarm	Rural-farm	Rural-nonfarm	Rural-farm
Northeast	565,639	80,515	411,875	41,028
North Central	780,253	465,992	609,515	214,727
South	1,484,709	610,605	1,117,703	275,404
West	413,120	109,695	350,112	53,283

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, General Social and Economic Characteristics, United States Summary, Final Report PC(1)-1C.

Figure 2 shows that rural-farm white males, 15-19, are over-represented (compared to rural-farm white males, 15-19, for the nation as whole) only in bands 3 and 4, i.e., in areas between 50 and 150 miles from the nearest metropolitan area. Overall, proportions increase with increasing distance from an SMSA, but beyond band 4 (150 miles) proportions decrease rapidly. In contract, rural-farm white males aged 20-24 are over-represented in bands 1 and 2 (in areas within 50 miles of an SMSA) and in band 6 (in areas beyond 200 miles from an SMSA). Generally, proportions decrease with increasing distance from an SMSA.

Figure 2. Index numbers showing the relative proportion of white youth in the farm population, by distance from the nearest SMSA, to the national average.*



* Index numbers show over- or under-representation in relation to national average for white farm youth, 15-19, males and females and for white farm youth, 20-24, males and females. A value of 100 indicates perfect representation.

Rural-farm white females in the same youth age groups exhibit patterns akin to that of the males. Females, 15-19, are over-represented only in bands 2 and 3 and reveal proportional increases through the first three bands but declining proportions as distance increases beyond 100 miles. The pattern for females, 20-24, is quite similar to that for males in the same age group.

Differential distributions of rural-farm youth about metropolitan areas might be explained in terms of the "holding power" of youth in the farm population and nearness to metropolitan areas. Heavy out-migration rates affect the relative proportion of youth aged 15-19 and 20-24 within the farm population, in spite of the generally higher farm birth rates in comparison with nonfarm rates.

The proportions of rural-farm youth aged 15-19 gradually increas with distance from the nearest SMSA. This suggests that for these rural farm youth, nearness to a metropolitan center enhances the effects of out-migration, and, thus, indicates a lack of "holding power" for farm youth by within areas near metropolitan centers. The decrease in proportion of rural-farm youth aged 15-19 for distances beyond 150 miles cannot be explained at a national level since the South and Northeast regions have relatively few areas 150 miles from any metropolis.

For farm youth, 20-24, the pattern is somewhat the countrary of farm youth aged 15-19. Figure 2 shows that areas nearest an SMSA have higher proportions of farm youth aged 20-24 and that proportions gradually decrease with increasing distance from metropolitan areas. Since this is a numerically small age group in the farm population, due to heavy out-migration, the holding power of the farm population, therefore, increases with nearness to a metropolitan center. The sudden increase in proportions beyond 200 miles from an SMSA cannot be explained at the national level since two of the four geographical regions have no areas beyond this point. Explanations for these distance bands must be couched in terms of regional factors.

RACE AND COLOR OF RURAL YOUTH(5)

Of the total 24 million persons aged 15 to 24 in the United States in 1960, approximately 21 million were white and about 3 million were non-white. Thus, 12.2 percent of American youth are non-white, a percentage not greatly different from the proportion of all non-whites in total American population. Of the 5.7 million rural-non-farm youth, approximately 651,000, or 11.4 percent, are non-white; of the 1.8 million rural-farm youth, approximately 273,000, or 14.8 percent, are non-white. Additional data on race are given in Tables 3 and 5.

While rural non-white youth aged 15 to 19 comprise 35.4 percent of all non-whites in this age group, the percentage drops to 26.5 percent for the ages of 20-24. The out-migration of non-white youth from rural areas is evident from the percentages just cited. The number of rural-farm non-whites aged 20 to 24 is less than half as large as those aged 15 to 19. An identical pattern occurs among the rural-farm white population.

Table 5. Number of Rural-nonfarm and Rural-farm Youth by Single Years of Age in The United States, by Color and Sex, 1960.

United States, by Rural Residence and age	Whites		Non-whites		Percent Non-white	Males		Females		Males per 100 Females
	Number	Per-cent	Number	Per-cent		Number	Per-cent	Number	Per-cent	
Rural-nonfarm										
Youth 15-24	5,082,024	100.0	650,902	100.0	11.4	3,048,482	100.0	2,684,444	100.0	113.6
15 years old	624,034	12.3	86,655	13.3	12.2	371,080	12.2	339,609	12.6	109.3
16 years old	629,398	12.4	83,322	12.8	11.7	371,075	12.2	341,645	12.7	108.6
17 years old	628,158	12.4	81,007	12.4	11.4	373,457	12.2	335,708	12.5	111.2
18 years old	514,138	10.1	71,889	11.0	12.3	322,497	10.6	263,530	9.8	122.4
19 years old	461,170	9.1	63,950	9.8	12.2	290,472	9.5	234,648	8.7	123.8
20 years old	443,793	8.7	58,095	8.9	11.6	274,914	9.0	226,974	8.5	121.1
21 years old	440,847	8.7	53,053	8.1	10.7	265,484	8.7	228,416	8.5	116.2
22 years old	441,673	8.7	51,126	7.9	10.4	258,868	8.5	233,931	8.7	110.7
23 years old	448,444	8.8	50,670	7.8	10.2	263,702	8.6	235,412	8.8	112.0
24 years old	450,369	8.9	51,135	7.9	10.2	256,933	8.4	244,571	9.1	105.1
Rural-farm										
Youth 15-24	1,577,821	100.0	273,428	100.0	14.8	1,011,150	100.0	840,099	100.0	120.4
15 years old	258,979	16.4	44,227	16.2	14.6	159,630	15.8	143,576	17.1	111.2
16 years old	264,748	16.8	42,328	15.5	13.8	164,569	16.3	142,507	17.0	115.5
17 years old	253,653	16.1	41,164	15.1	14.0	160,016	15.8	134,801	16.0	118.7
18 years old	174,022	11.0	33,040	12.1	16.0	118,470	11.7	88,592	10.5	133.7
19 years old	128,666	8.2	25,980	9.5	16.8	88,863	8.8	65,783	7.8	135.1
20 years old	111,805	7.1	22,563	8.3	16.8	77,256	7.6	57,112	6.8	135.3
21 years old	104,943	6.7	18,166	6.6	14.8	69,986	6.9	53,123	6.3	131.7
22 years old	97,728	6.2	16,843	6.2	14.7	62,853	6.2	51,718	6.2	121.5
23 years old	91,188	5.8	14,590	5.3	13.8	55,635	5.5	50,143	6.0	111.0
24 years old	92,089	5.8	14,527	5.3	13.6	53,872	5.3	52,744	6.3	102.1

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, Detailed Characteristics, United States Summary, Final Report PC(1C)-1D.

The data supplied in Table 5 illuminate the process of out-migration from rural areas. For both whites and non-whites residing in each of the rural residence categories, there is a general decline in numbers and percentages with increasing age. Net losses from the rural-farm population, for both whites and non-whites, occur at a greater rate than from the rural-nonfarm population. The decline is most marked between ages 17 and 18 for both whites and non-whites.

SEX COMPOSITION OF THE RURAL YOUTH(6)

One of the striking characteristics of rural youth is the high ratio of males to females. For all youth aged 15-19 in 1960, the sex ratio was 101.7; for all youth aged 20-24 it was 95.7. For rural-nonfarm and rural-farm youth aged 15-19, however, the ratios were 114.2 and 120.0, respectively. For the two rural groups aged 20-24, the ratios were 113.4 and 118.5. Thus, rural youth differ markedly from urban youth in the large excess of males. In contrast, there is a marked excess of females among urban youth. (See Tables 3 and 5.)

The high sex ratio among rural youth holds true for both whites and non-whites. In general, however, the sex ratios among non-white youth are considerably lower than among white youth. In contrast to the white youth, the non-whites exhibit highest ratios in the rural-nonfarm rather than rural-farm residence category.

The high proportion of males at each age from 15 to 24, shown in Table 5, is evidence of the selective migration of females from both rural-farm and rural-nonfarm populations. The disparity between males and females is greatest at ages 18, 19, 20, and 21. The location of military bases and penal institutions in rural areas also helps to raise the sex ratios for rural areas. For instance, 23 percent of the rural-nonfarm males aged 20-24 are military.

MARITAL STATUS OF RURAL YOUTH(7)

Differences in the marital status of youth 15 to 19 and those 20 to 24 are large, as shown in Table 6, especially when controlled for sex and color. Higher proportions of females than males are married in both age groups, regardless of residence and color. In the age group 15 to 19, 15.7 percent of all females in 1960 were married in contrast to only 3.8 percent of all males; in the age group 20-24, the percentages married were 69.5 percent and 45.8 percent.

A small proportion of rural-farm white males in both age groups is married (2.5 and 33.9 percent). In contrast, a large proportion of rural-nonfarm white males is married (4.1 and 47.6 percent). Among non-white males the same situation prevails. Compared with national average for the age group 15-19, a large proportion of rural-nonfarm white females and a small proportion of rural-farm white females is married. In the age group 20 to 24, however, the proportion of white females married among both rural groups is high. Non-white females in both rural residence groups exhibit smaller than average proportions married.

Table 6. Percent of Youth 15-19 and 20-24 Married for the United States by Rural Residence, Sex and Color, 1960.

United States by Rural Residence and Color	Percent Married, by Age and Sex			
	Youth 15-19		Youth 20-24	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Total U. S.				
White	3.8	15.7	46.3	70.5
Non-white	3.7	15.8	42.0	62.2
Rural-nonfarm				
White	4.1	18.9	47.6	80.9
Non-white	3.1	14.5	35.6	61.6
Rural-farm				
White	2.5	10.6	33.9	71.2
Non-white	2.9	11.7	33.5	54.7

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, Detailed Characteristics, United States Summary. Final Report PC(1C)-1D.

SELECTED SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RURAL YOUTH(8)

This portion of the paper is devoted to a brief examination of school enrollment, level of schooling of 15 year-old youth who are not in school, labor force participation, and income levels.

The percentage of youth enrolled in school, by residence and ages from 14 to 24, is shown in Table 7. Considering all youth from 14 to 24, one-half were enrolled in school in 1960. Rural-farm youth of these ages were enrolled in highest proportions and rural-nonfarm youth in lowest proportions, the percentages being 57.5 and 46.4, respectively. The high proportion enrolled by rural-farm youth, however, is largely due to the relatively small numbers in the upper ranges of the age span. The percentage of rural-farm youth enrolled for each age (14 and 15, 16 and 17, 18 and 19, 20 and 21, and 22 to 24) is below that for urban youth. The large decline in school enrollment among farm youth occurs after age 17.

Fifteen-year old youth were selected to examine level of schooling on the part of those not in school. A summary of the essential data is found in Table 8. The percentage of 15 year-old youth not in school ranges from a low of 6.7 percent for white rural-farm females to a high of 15.5 percent for non-white rural-nonfarm males. Generally percentages not in school are higher for rural-nonfarm than for rural-farm groups. While some of the 15 year-old youth may return to school, it is probably safe to assume that a large majority will never do so. Hence, the level of schooling attained by these 15 year-old youth is of considerable significance.

Table 7. Percent Enrolled in School In The United States, by Residence and Age, 1960

United States by Residence	Percent Enrolled in School, by Age					
	Total Youth 14-24	Youth 14 and 15 Years Old	Youth 16 and 17 Years Old	Youth 18 and 19 Years Old	Youth 20 and 21 Years Old	Youth 22 to 24 Years Old
Total U. S.	50.0	94.1	80.9	42.1	21.1	10.2
Urban	50.5	94.9	82.0	45.2	24.9	12.0
Rural-non-farm	46.4	92.6	77.8	33.9	11.8	5.8
Rural-farm	57.5	93.0	81.8	38.9	10.1	4.8

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, General Social and Economic Characteristics, United States Summary. Final Report PC(1)-1C.

Table 8. Youth 15 Years Old not in School Classified by Years of School Completed for the United States, by Rural Residence, Sex and Color, 1960.

United States, by Rural Residence, Color and Sex	15 Years Old Youth					
	Number not in School	Percent not in School	Percent not in School, by Years of School Completed			
			No School Years	Elementary School	Some High School	Four Years of High School
RURAL-NONFARM						
All Classes	63,973	9.0	8.8	60.3	28.5	2.3
White Males	26,600	8.2	10.1	61.0	26.6	2.3
White Females	24,657	8.3	7.4	54.2	35.7	2.7
Non-white Males	7,029	15.5	9.2	74.9	14.2	1.7
Non-white Females	5,687	13.8	8.6	65.7	24.4	1.3
RURAL-FARM						
All Classes	25,505	8.4	5.6	63.9	28.3	2.2
White Males	10,906	7.9	4.6	64.0	29.1	2.2
White Females	8,238	6.7	5.6	56.3	35.5	2.6
Non-white Males	3,488	15.3	8.5	77.8	12.8	0.8
Non-white Females	2,973	13.9	5.8	68.1	23.6	2.5

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, Detailed Characteristics, United States Summary. Final Report PC(C)-1D.

The progressive entry of youth into the labor force is depicted in Table 9. For rural-farm males, labor force participation rises from 22.6 percent for those 14 and 15 years old to 90.0 percent for those 20 to 24 years old. For rural-nonfarm males, the participation rate is lower than rural-farm at every age. For rural-farm females, labor force participation rises from 6.8 percent for those 14 and 15 years old to 34.4 percent for those 20 to 24 years old. Rates for rural-nonfarm females are higher than those for rual-farm females for most ages. Differences in labor force participation are shown in Table 8 for white and non-white youth as well.

Table 9. Percent Youth in Labor Force for the United States, by Rural Residence, by Color, Sex and Age, 1960

United States, by Rural Residence and Age	Percent in Labor Force, by Color and Sex					
	Total		Whites		Non-whites	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Total U. S.						
14 and 15 years old	16.0	6.9	16.6	7.2	12.5	5.4
16 and 17 years old	36.8	20.8	37.9	21.8	28.8	14.0
18 and 19 years old	66.4	46.3	67.4	47.9	58.8	34.9
20 to 24 years old	86.2	44.8	86.8	44.7	82.0	45.5
Rural-nonfarm						
14 and 15 years old	13.5	6.5	13.7	6.6	12.2	6.1
16 and 17 years old	33.6	16.4	34.2	16.9	29.2	12.7
18 and 19 years old	68.7	38.0	70.3	39.5	56.8	26.9
20 to 24 years old	87.9	35.0	89.2	34.9	77.0	35.7
Rural-farm						
14 and 15 years old	22.6	6.8	23.1	6.8	19.5	7.1
16 and 17 years old	40.2	13.9	40.9	14.3	36.0	11.4
18 and 19 years old	69.2	36.1	70.9	39.4	59.5	21.2
20 to 24 years old	90.0	34.4	91.1	35.2	83.5	30.1

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, Detailed Characteristics, United States Summary. Final Report PC(C)-1D

An elementary picture of the average income of rural youth is given in Table 10. With one exception, the median incomes for rural-nonfarm and rural-farm youth are considerably below national average for each of the age, color and sex groups. The exception occurred for white rural-nonfarm youth, aged 14 to 19, whose median income of $725 matched that of all youth their ages. The most disadvantaged group, of course, is the rural-farm youth, especially the non-whites.

THE FUTURE OF THE RURAL POPULATION AND RURAL YOUTH

Not only is it difficult to make assertions about the rural population without reference to total population movements, but it is doubly hazardous to predict the future whether it be the total population or any of its parts.

Nonetheless, a number of trends in process are unlikely to be reversed. Among such trends are:

(1) The urbanization and centralization of population. This trend takes the form of growth in cities but especially in the suburban areas around them. Rates of population growth are much more rapid in the Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas than outside them. The rural-farm population has been declining for a number of years.

(2) Movement to the West and to warm climate areas. Not only is the center of population moving westward and southward, the West is growing much more rapidly than the other regions of the nation.

(3) The increasing numbers of youth and growing labor force. The high birth rates for more than a decade assure large additions to the labor force in the near future. At the same time, increasing numbers and proportions will be found in the most advanced years.

Table 10. Median Income of Persons With Income in 1959 for the United States, by Age, Sex, Color and Residence, 1960.

United States, by Rural Residence and Color	Median Income of Persons with Income in 1959			
	Youth 14 to 19		Youth 20 to 24	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Total U. S.				
Whites	$725	$704	$2,705	$1,815
Non-whites	$674	$624	$1,733	$ 902
Rural-nonfarm				
Whites	$725	$660	$2,450	$1,436
Non-whites	$627	$555	$1,320	$ 644
Rural-farm				
Whites	$652	$647	$1,996	$1,467
Non-whites	$566	$536	$ 788	$ 575

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, Detailed Characteristics, United States Summary. Final Report PC(1C)-1D.

SUMMARY

Some of the salient characteristics of the rural-farm and rural-nonfarm youth populations (as of 1960) are:

(1) Rural youth, defined as those aged 15 to 24, comprise an important portion of the American population. They number 7.5 million persons, with 5.7 million residing in rural-nonfarm areas and 1.8 million residing in rural-farm areas. Rural-nonfarm and rural-farm youth in these ages form a larger percentage of their respective total populations than urban youth.

(2) Rural youth aged 15 to 19 are much more numerous than those aged 20 to 24, due primarily to out-migration. The decline in numbers is less marked in the rural-nonfarm population (about 3.2 million to about 2.5 million) than in the rural-farm population (about 1.3 million to about 600,000). Another way of expressing this situation is to relate the percentage each age group is of the total population. While youth 15-19 comprise 8.0 percent of the total rural-nonfarm population, youth 20-24 comprise only 6.1 percent. In the rural-farm population the comparable percentages are more dramatic -- 9.4 percent and 4.3 percent.

(3) Rural youth are concentrated more in the South than in any region, regardless of age or rural residence groups. Ranking next to the South in number of rural youth is the North Central Region. Rural-farm youth are not numerous, comparatively, in the Northeast and West.

(4) Of the 7.5 million rural youth, approximately 924,000 are non-whites. Non-whites represent slightly more than 11 percent of the rural-nonfarm youth but nearly 15 percent of rural-farm youth. While non-white youth are predominantly Negroes, rural youth of other non-white races number approximately 93,000. Of this number, about 75 thousand reside in rural-nonfarm areas and 18 thousand in rural-farm areas.

(5) Sex ratios (males per 100 females) are high in rural populations. Among rural-nonfarm youth 15-24, the sex ratio is 113.6; among rural-farm youth of these ages, the sex ratio is 120.4. The explanation of these high ratios, of course, is largely associated with the high rate of out-migration of females from rural areas, and partly due to the location of military bases and penal institutions in rural areas. Between the ages of 18 and 21 or 22, the sex ratio among rural youth is particularly high.

(6) The two age groups under consideration cover the period in which most marriages occur in American society. Approximately 1 in every 6 or 7 females 15-19 in rural areas is married whereas only about 1 in 25 or 30 males 15 - 19 is married. In the age group 20 to 24, 71 and 81 percent of rural-farm and rural-nonfarm white females are married. The comparable percentages for white males are 34 and 48 percent. Proportions married are higher for whites than non-whites.

(7) At each age between 14 and 24, lower proportions of rural than urban youth are enrolled in school, with greatest differences at the upper end of the age range. Between 6.7 and 15.5 percent of all 15 year-old rural youth were no longer enrolled in school. Nonenrollment was highest among rural-nonfarm non-white males and lowest among rural-farm white females. At least 60 percent of the 15 year-old youth not in school had completed elementary school or less.

(8) The age span covered also is one in which youths enter the labor force. For rural males 14 and 15 years old, the percentages in labor force range from 12 to 23 percent; for rural males 20 to 24, the comparable range in percentage is from 77 to 91. Rural youth, both whites and non-whites, receive less compensation for work than non-rural youth.

(9) Rapid growth of the American population in the next two decades, if not for a longer period, is a virtual certainty, barring calamity. The growth of metropolitan areas will continue, in all probability. Since a large part of the rural-nonfarm population resides in suburbs, this segment of the rural population may be expected to keep pace with urban growth. The rural-farm portion, however, in all probability, will continue to decline.

FOOTNOTES

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2. See the discussion in Wrong, Dennis H., Population and Society, New York: Random House, 1961 and Petersen, William, Population, New York: Macmillan Company, 1961.

3. The change in definition reduced the rural-farm population by about 4.2 million as about one-fifth of the rural-farm population according to the 1950 definition. See "Effect of Definition Changes on Size and Composition of the Rural-farm Population: April 1960 and 1959", Bureau of the Census and Agricultural Marketing Service, Series Census - AMS (p-27) No. 28, April 17, 1961. See also Population Bulletin, The American Farmer, Vol. XIX, No. 3, May 1963.

4. See Bowles, Gladys K., Rural-Farm Males Entering and Leaving Working Ages, 1940-50 and 1950-60, Washington: AMS, V.S.D.A., Series Census - AMS (p-27), No. 22, 1956; See also Components of Population Change, 1950 to 1960, For Counties, Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas, and Economic Subregions, Current Population Reports, Series p-23, No. 7, 1962.

5. See Bogue, Donald J., The Population of the United States, Glencoe: The Free Press, 1959, chapter 7; United States Department of Labor, Negroes in the United States: Their Employment and Economic Status; Bulletin 1119, Washington 1952; and Friend, Reed E. and Baum, Samuel, "Economic, Social and Demographic Characteristics of Spanish-American Wage Workers on U. S. Farm." ERS, U.S.D.A., Report No. 27, March 1963.

6. Bogue, Ibid., Chapter 8.

7. Bogue, Ibid., Chapter 10.

8. See Bogue, Ibid., Chapters 13, 16 and 20; Cowhig, James, "Education Skill Level, and Earnings of the Hired Farm Working Force of 1961", ERS, U.S.D.A., Report No. 26, March 1963.

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